

MINUTES
OPC MEETING
November 22, 2016

First Selectman Stevenson called the meeting to order in Room 206 of Town Hall at 8:37 am.

Present were First Selectman Jayme Stevenson, Board of Education Chairman Michael Harman, Board of Finance Chairman Jon Zagrodzky, Chairman of Planning & Zoning Commission Susan Cameron and State Representative Terrie Wood. Town Administrator Kate Buch and Selectman Susan Marks were also in attendance. Seth Morton was absent.

Board of Education

The BOE has voted to keep Michael Harman as Chairman, Betsy Hagerty-Ross as Vice-Chairman and Diana Maguire as Secretary. A BOE representative to the CSWG will be forthcoming.

Mr. Harman stated that the Board has reached agreements with both the Teachers' and Administrator's unions. Some items of the agreements were discussed. The classroom size policy being established will basically codify what's already in practice. Enrollment projections due to housing developments are estimated to increase student population by about .5 students per new unit of housing. Dr. Brenner is supportive of expanding the Alternative Learning Program and should the program need a new location, a temporary rental property may be considered.

Turkey Bowl tickets sold out in about 15 minutes. Next year Darien will be the home team and Boyle Stadium in Stamford has already been reserved. It was not available this year.

Planning & Zoning

Items to be addressed by the P&Z Commission in the coming months include: the Ox Ridge Hunt club property, updates to signage regulations, review of lighting regulations, residential density and consideration of combining business zones. Ms. Cameron provided a list of major agenda items to be addressed by the Commission in December and January.

Lastly, the Stephen Mather Homestead was built in 1778 and is the longest single family owned property in New England. The Stephen Mather Homestead Foundation has filed an application to preserve it as a "Protected Town Landmark" and operate it as a museum and educational center. The Mather family and its homestead are rich with local and national history.

State Representative

Mrs. Wood will begin work on the new session in Hartford on January 4th with budget deficits expected to be the major focus during the creation of a new two year State budget. Mrs. Stevenson plans to reach out to Darien's other delegates to seek information on the budget, including the effects of possible regionalization efforts on Darien taxpayers. Mrs. Stevenson mentioned that she has been appointed to the Board of CCM and would be happy to bring forth issues to concern.

Terrie Wood left for Hartford at 9:23 am.

Board of Finance

Mr. Zagrodzky announced that the Board of Finance has supported the purchase of OpenGov software for the Town. The BOE is still reviewing it. The State of the Town will include the Board's five year budget plan. The BOF supports the purchase of Ox Ridge Hunt Club property because it will be done with low bonding costs and will preserve open space with the option to use it for another purpose in the future. The Board will be scrutinizing BOE capital expenditures carefully, looking to see flexibility in building plans to address fluctuating classroom sizes.

First Selectman

Mrs. Stevenson encourages residents to write to their delegates on municipal revenue sharing and regionalization. Proposed Health Department regionalization could mean Darien taxpayers pay into the regional health department roughly two million dollars as opposed to the \$295,000 Darien's health department costs now while providing effective local support. Mrs. Stevenson also plans to ask the CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) to conduct an evening seminar in Darien on the nuts and bolts of economic development.

Department Heads will be directed to produce budgets which do not exceed a 2% increase – the same as last year. Finally, Mrs. Stevenson asked people to review the new street lights on the Post Road, 500 feet on either side of Renshaw Road, and provide feedback on them.

Mrs. Stevenson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2016 meeting. Jon Zagrodzky so moved, Mike Harman seconded and the minutes were approved with three in favor. Susan Cameron abstained. The meeting adjourned at 9:44 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda O'Leary
Recording Secretary